



USAID | PHILIPPINES

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 20, 2006

Tracking # 2006-004press.doc

Public Information: 2-552-9905

Email: kedonahue@usaid.gov

<http://philippines.usaid.gov>

PRESS RELEASE

SANDIGANBAYAN LAUNCHES AUTOMATED CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WITH USAID SUPPORT

Quezon City: On Monday, March 13, the Sandiganbayan (anti-graft court) successfully launched an automated Case Management and Information System (CMIS) that will significantly reduce docket congestion and delays in hearing cases. The CMIS will enable Sandiganbayan justices to track the status of cases pending before their divisions. **This will accelerate the trial process by...**

USAID offered technical and financial assistance for the development and implementation of the CMIS at the Sandiganbayan. USAID initiated support for the effort in March 2005 through its Rule of Law Effectiveness (ROLE) Activity which sponsored a series of workshops on reducing trial time in the Sandiganbayan. The ROLE Activity brought together the justices and staff of the court with their clientele to address delays in the anti-graft trial system. The ROLE Activity helps Philippine government counterparts – including the courts system – to improve policy, administration, and efficiency by reducing opportunities for corruption. At the CMIS' inauguration on March 13, Jon D. Lindborg, Mission Director for USAID/Philippines said, "USAID is truly proud to be involved in this reform initiative to make the anti-graft court more efficient and effective in case processing."

To prepare the justices and staff for the implementation of the automated case management and information system, USAID also provided technical and financial assistance in the conduct of basic, intermediate and advanced computer trainings for Sandiganbayan justices and staff. USAID purchased software, scanners, network hubs and routers to fully interconnect the Sandiganbayan through a local area network. All of these activities were made possible because the Supreme Court had already prioritized the Sandiganbayan in the distribution of newly-purchased computers for the Philippine court system.

The ROLE Activity, and its grantees, the American Bar Association – Asia Law Initiative, and The Asia Foundation (TAF) have supported a number of activities and programs in addition to the development and implementation of the automated CMIS. In June 2005, USAID brought five Sandiganbayan justices and one court official to the United States to study and observe the process of continuous trial in U.S. federal and state courts. The Sandiganbayan is looking forward to the implementation of a continuous trial system this year, on a limited scale, as the Presiding Justice has committed to introduce its practice in her division. USAID also engaged the services of a retired Sandiganbayan justice to assist the court in the revision of its internal rules to facilitate speedier trial by removing



USAID | PHILIPPINES

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

PRESS RELEASE

chokepoints in case processing. These new internal rules have been approved by the Sandiganbayan justices en banc are now with the Supreme Court for consideration.

###